



State of Tennessee

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 48

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mary Irene Pieratt Plumlee of Oak Ridge.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mary Irene Pieratt Plumlee; and

WHEREAS, a longtime educator, Mary Irene Pieratt Plumlee was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mary Irene Plumlee served with acumen and alacrity as a teacher for many years, in which position she earned the respect of her peers and her students alike for the exemplary quality of her work; and

WHEREAS, born on January 1, 1914, in Morgan County, Kentucky, she was the eighth child of twelve children born to Napoleon and Loulie Ellen Pieratt and was raised on a farm in rural Eastern Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, the only member of her family to obtain a high school education, Mary Irene Plumlee worked her way through college at Berea College in Central Kentucky, even interrupting her education to return home and teach school in a one-room schoolhouse for several years; and

WHEREAS, after her college graduation she moved to Celina, Tennessee, and married George Newton Plumlee, Jr., whom she had met at Berea, and began teaching English in the local high school, where her husband also taught before he went to work for the Army Corps of Engineers in the construction of Dale Hollow Dam; and

WHEREAS, after completion of the dam in 1943, the young couple relocated to Oak Ridge in 1944, with George first working in a laboratory before moving to the developing local school system to teach science; and

WHEREAS, Mary taught for a short time at the old Wheat School before the birth of the couple's first child and spent the next few years as a mother and homemaker, only returning to teaching after her children reached school age themselves; and

WHEREAS, Mary Plumlee began her return to teaching by working as a substitute teacher in the Oak Ridge school system before going on to teach in the Knox, Anderson, and Roane County school systems. She eventually completed a graduate degree at George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, now part of Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, Mary Plumlee spent the latter part of her career teaching at Oliver Springs Elementary School, where she taught the second grade during the day and adult education classes at night as she found her niche – a mountain woman teaching mountain students; and

WHEREAS, committed to quality education for all, even after her official retirement Mrs. Plumlee continued to teach, working as a substitute teacher and voluntarily tutoring Vietnamese refugees residing in the area; and

WHEREAS, Mary Plumlee's retirement years were marked by numerous activities, including travels across much of the southeastern United States with a Methodist senior group, gardening, day trips and picnics with friends which included her fabulous home-cooked meals and wonderful fudge, and wonderful times spent with her beloved children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mary Plumlee was deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Plumlee is survived by her son, George, and his wife, Donna; her daughter, Claudia, and her husband, Ferruccio Gera; four granddaughters, Mary Plumlee Meeuwis, Catherine

Plumlee, Vanessa Gera, and Daniela Gera Fanikos; two great-grandsons, Jacob Fanikos and Benjamin Fanikos; and a host of other family members and dear friends; and

WHEREAS, Mary Plumlee leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Mary Irene Pieratt Plumlee, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Plumlee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

ADOPTED: May 19, 2011



RON RAMSEY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE